

## **Important Election Information for the 2018 Primary Election**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Annapolis, Maryland (May 21, 2018) – For the 2018 Primary Election, voters can vote in person or by absentee ballot. To vote in person, voters who reside in Howard County can vote before election day at a designated early voting center in Howard County **or** on election day at the polling place for their residence in Howard County.

Early voting centers will be open for voting from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm from Thursday, June 14th through and including Thursday, June 21st. The early voting centers in Howard County are located at Ridgely's Run Community Center, All-Purpose Room, 8400 Mission Road, Jessup, MD 20794; Miller Branch Library, Meeting Rooms, 9421 Frederick Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042; The Bain Center, Great Rooms 1 & 2, 9470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia, MD 21044; and, Howard County Fairgrounds, Old Bingo Hall, 2210 Fairgrounds Road, West Friendship, MD 21794. Howard County voters may vote at the designated early voting centers. A list of early voting locations can be found at: [elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/2018\\_Early\\_Voting\\_Centers\\_web.pdf](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/2018_Early_Voting_Centers_web.pdf)

Voters who prefer to vote on election day can vote on **Tuesday, June 26, 2018**. On election day, polling places will be open for voting from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. To avoid delays, voters should try to vote between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.

### **Where Do I Vote?**

During early voting, Howard County voters should vote at a designated early voting center in Howard County. There is at least one early voting center in every county. Centers are located at accessible facilities with adequate parking and within a convenient driving distance for most voters in the county. Information about early voting centers and early voting in general is available at: [elections.maryland.gov/voting/early\\_voting.html](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/early_voting.html)

On election day, Howard County voters should vote at their assigned polling place. Voters can find their assigned precinct by looking at the voter notification card they received from the Howard County Board of Elections or by clicking the Find Your Polling Place link at: [elections.maryland.gov](http://elections.maryland.gov). Voters who have moved, but have not updated their address with the Howard County Board of Elections, should search for the polling place for their new address or contact the Howard County Board of Elections. It is important for voters to vote in the polling place for their new address because only those contests for which voters are eligible to vote will be counted.

### **How Do I Vote?**

Maryland elections are conducted with a paper-based voting system. Voters will cast votes by marking and scanning paper ballots. Most voters will use a pen to mark a paper ballot by hand and voters unable to mark a ballot by hand will use a ballot marking device. All voters will insert their marked paper ballots into a scanner. Instructions will be available to help voters familiarize themselves with the ballot and how to vote. Voters may also ask an election judge to explain how to vote on the voting system,

but a voter must vote alone, unless the voter is unable to do so because of disability, inability to write, or inability to read the ballot.

For absentee and provisional voting, voters are issued a paper ballot. Absentee voters, who choose to receive their ballot electronically, print their own paper ballot to mark by hand. Voters fill in the oval next to each candidate and ballot question response they select. An online ballot marking tool is also available. Using the tool, voters mark their ballot using their computer, then print their paper ballot and return it by mail. At the Howard County Board of Elections, absentee ballots are fed into a scanning unit which reads and tabulates the selections made by voters. **All** provisional ballots and absentee ballots are reviewed in a public meeting after the election and counted or rejected according to State law and regulation.

### **How Can I Get an Absentee Ballot?**

Voters may request to receive their absentee ballot by mail, electronically, or by fax. Visit [elections.maryland.gov/voting/absentee.html](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/absentee.html) to request an absentee ballot. The deadline to request a mailed or faxed absentee ballot is **Tuesday, June 19, 2018**. The deadline to request an electronic absentee ballot is **Friday, June 22, 2018**. Voters who request an electronic absentee ballot will be notified by email that their ballot is ready for download, then instructed to enter unique identifying information before printing their ballot, voting instructions, and return envelope template. If a Howard County voter misses the above deadlines, but still wants to vote by absentee ballot, the voter or the voter's agent must apply in person at the Howard County Board of Elections before 8pm on election day. Visit [elections.maryland.gov/voting/absentee.html](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/absentee.html) for more information.

Voted absentee ballots may be delivered to the Howard County Board of Elections by 8:00 pm on election day **or** mailed on or before election day and received by the local board by Friday, July 6, 2018. **All** absentee ballots are reviewed, regardless of whether or not the absentee ballots will impact the outcome of an election.

### **What is a Provisional Ballot?**

A provisional ballot is a safeguard to ensure that individuals who believe they are registered and eligible to vote are able to vote. Voters required to vote by provisional ballot will be asked to complete a provisional ballot application, and then issued a paper ballot. It is important that voters complete the entire provisional ballot application because the information on the application is used to determine whether the provisional ballot will be counted.

**All** provisional ballot applications are reviewed, regardless of whether or not the provisional ballots impact the outcome of an election. A provisional ballot will only be counted after the Howard County Board of Elections has reviewed the provisional ballot application and determined that the individual is in fact registered and eligible to vote the provisional ballot. Additional information about provisional voting is available at: [elections.maryland.gov/voting/provisional\\_voting.html](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/provisional_voting.html)

Voters can visit [elections.maryland.gov/elections/2018/index.html](http://elections.maryland.gov/elections/2018/index.html) for more 2018 election information or contact the Howard County Board of Elections at 410-313-5820 or the State Board of Elections at 1-800-222-VOTE (8683).

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